DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 030 129 CG 003 021

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Current and Developing Issues in Student Life.
Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education, Detroit, Mich.
Pub Date 68
Note-21p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.15
Descriptors-*College Role, *Colleges, *College Students, *Student College Relationship

The university, in terms of its functions, can be viewed as a social critic, an implementer of social change, and a provider of associates for students as they develop critical facilities through the process of disciplined reflection. The problems concerned with increasing institutional commitment to partisan groups and the maintenance of the dual role of critic and implementer of social change are considered. Disciplined reflection by students can be sided by the presence of older people, manageable groups for easy and open communication, and flexibility in organizational arrangements which permit the formation of groups around topics important to the individual. Changes in relationships between students and the college which replace the in loco parentis role are discussed. The need for improvements in present and proposed student housing is studied. Changing student attitudes and the norms for acceptable student behavior are discussed in relation to the impact of ideas on society. The increasing role of students in governing the university is discussed. (PS)

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Current and Developing Issues in Student Life *

The development of the Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education (COSPA) was initiated in 1953 by the officers of four separate professional groups whose members shared similar professional and functional concerns. Their common interest in the problems and potentialities of the educational experience of college and university students forms the thread which binds the loose federation of approximately a dozen groups today. The chief purpose of the Council is to encourage and facilitate communication among and between the separate, but overlapping, membership of the different associations. In a few instances, cross-organizational committees or commissions have been appointed; and the Commission on Current and Developing Student Issues is one such body.

The material that follows was developed by the Commission, and represents the thinking of the members of the Commission. Commission

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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members speak in this instance as a group of individuals from all constituent organizations, expecting some agreement and some disagreement from colleagues with the substance of the report. The report does not, then, necessarily represent the official position or inclinations of any of the organizations that the Commission members represent. It seeks, in its own way, "to encourage and facilitate communication."

The charge to the Commission and the definition of the scope of its work ruled out any expectation that early reports, such as this one, would be definitive. Commission members intended to make available to interested colleagues their perception of several philosophical and operational issues that affect our common work. Consideration of the practical applications and interpretations of the Commission's work is the responsibility of COSPA groups, institutional staffs, and individual members of our several associations. The Commission has not accepted - as yet - any major responsibility for spelling out the programmatic implications of its concerns.

The question of the function of higher education - as a social institution undergoing significant restructuring and redirection in our society - is an obvious and legitimate starting place for any consideration of emerging issues in student personnel work. Our views ranged from the thought that we may be midstream in a host of collegial changes that date from Berkeley's student demonstrations, to a belief that what is ahead will count the time since Berkeley as only the very beginning and harbinger, but not the shaper, of change - the end-product being a pattern of higher education that bears very little relationship to any of those with which we are familiar today. From any position on this spectrum, issues revolve around

the changing relationships between the institution and the soceity within which it exists; among the students, the faculty, and members of the administration of the institution itself; and around the ways in which these changes will affect the nature of the curriculum and the college experience and the ways in which access to higher education is made available to students. The following six sections are designed to spell out in more detail some of the identifiable areas within this over-all question of the function of higher education in the future.

I

The role of observer and disinterested critic has always been essential and present in societies that are characterized as dynamic, flowering, and productive. The Greek philosophers, the church as representative of various religions at different times, and the family have all played the role of critic, stabilizer, and value-determiner in their own fashion. It can be argued that the church and family in Western society do not now exert major and effective pressure as social critics, and that members of institutions of higher education have found themselves thrust more and more into the role played by their intellectual forebears in ancient Greece (even though the formal philosophers in our midst today are playing some of the least active parts in the process of definition and development of the changes about us).

To be "critical" is to evaluate social process from a considered, normative base. This term implies investigative and evaluative, rather than judgmental, behavior. A critic, in this sense, is an informed person who makes normative judgments.

The emergence of the intellectual as social critic in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was associated with the battle cry by the professor for academic freedom. The reference to universities as "ivory towers" carries suggestions of the successful fight to establish and protect the principle from external attack. This function of the ivory tower as part of the campus-as-fortress eventually gave way to the observer-critic of the society in which the campus is inevitably and integrally embedded.

It can be argued that this role of observer-critic for the academic is being eroded, and that no other segment of our society is prepared to take it up. The erosion process can be dated from the late Thirties and early Forties, when the usefulness of the scientific academic community to the government in the pursuit of World War II became inevitable. Subsequent overtures from the government to the campus have led faculty members from the social sciences into comparable public arenas, and the notion that the faculty member should be an "applied academic" became more and more acceptable. That this process and its ethical and intellectual problems are not confined to the American scene can be found in several novels by C. P. Snow about our English academic colleagues.

More and more, one can find evidence of academic, governmental, and even private philanthropic foundation pressures applied to encourage - or force - the institution to come down on one side or another of a host of social problems for which it is presumed that there are at least two identifiable sides. Students want their education to be a part of life

and not apart from life. The temptation is great, and the invitation is sincere and, sometimes insistent. Faculties are encouraged to speak out on Viet Nam and the draft, on Federal appropriations for the relief of urban blight, on the improvement of education at all levels. There are few matters of national interest today on which the support or opposition of the academic community is not sought or on which it would not be welcomed. But the distinction has been insufficiently made between a college's or a university's taking an <u>institutional</u> stance toward some controversial topic as against its institutionally protecting virtually any position taken by the <u>individuals</u> who belong to it. Through the sanctuary defined by academic freedom, an institution may advance social criticism by providing a place where <u>persons</u> may think normatively about the problems of society without fear of fatal reprisals if their thought leads to contraventions of the conventional wisdom. But to serve as this kind of privileged locus for critical intellect, the college cannot institutionally commit itself to a particular position except for the crucial position that insists on academic freedom. Once it has taken a stand in favor of some controversial alternative, the institution no longer is cherished by society as a home for the critical and thoughtful consideration of social options; it becomes a partisan force which, in keeping with our ancient system of checks and balances, must be contained by open competition with other partisan forces. Or - and here we have the issue - is this formulation only an academic party line, at best outmoded by contemporary circumstance and at worst a set of empty shibboleths throughout its history?

We hold that unless an institution can maintain itself in a free and uncommitted position, the whole delicate concept of academic freedom itself is jeopardized. Once this academic rood screen has been torn from the institutional structure, the institution actually risks its ability to maintain the freedom that students and faculty want preserved for their more customary, if less intense, life of intramural debate in the pursuit of Truth. There is no place in the world today so hospitable to the exploration of ideas as is the university, and such an environment, especially in our time, merits careful conservation.

What is the university? Our working definition of the ideal differs only in wording from most others, and yet it is important to deal rather precisely with it. The university, as the Commission members see it, is a place in which one is permitted to debate ideas. It is not the temple of Truth, but more nearly the Circus Maximus in which the pursuit of Truth is the main attraction. It is a place in which individuals are encouraged to debate openly, vocally, and frequently allowed to do so irresponsibly. It is a place that holds the acquisition of disciplined habits of reflection as a major shared objective of its members. It is a place that does not require evidence of the pursuit of truth for admission, but does for graduation. It is a place no longer sure that it can "transmit the culture" in four-year packages. The massiveness and tempo of social change have rendered such basis for education insufficient, although possibly still necessary in our time. We become more and more convinced that the university should be in the business of running a debating ground for life. We are not advocating that the college become <u>merely</u> a debating society.

Rather, we are arguing that its emphasis on debate is necessarily instrumental to the cultivation of the habit of reflecting systematically on experience, to the acquisition of the knowledge and the skills that facilitate normative judgment.

These observations have led us to question the extent to which the involvement of the academy in the life of the society reduces its ability to play the role of social critic. We wonder if there is a real cost, whatever the disadvantages, in the loss of distinction between the academy and the society, between town and gown. If these lines are erased, and the energies of the faculty and students are more or less directed toward the solution of social problems in the community within which they live, will we find a loss of the critical frame of reference within which these problems have heretofore been viewed from the campus? Would society's Mr. Fixit role deny institutions the right to claim they are free in their reception and treatment of ideas? Will the useful role of critic be eroded? Or is the emerging role of social implementer more significant and important than that of critic? Can the universities manage both roles at once? We doubt that any institution capable of making unique contributions as social implementer can afford to deny its opportunity. We fear that other institutions may feel that such behavior by one institution defines an essential function for all. While we believe that combination of functions is probably essential and possible, we urge against over-hasty leaps over the institutional wall.

From the very practical point of view, this issue can have an effect on programs in student activities, housing, and government. But there is probably a larger and more significant nest of questions that should be raised and considered first. For example, in what way can students with activist or "opting-out" leanings be brought to a serious consideration of this very question? To what extent are the actions in which they are engaging and the goals which they are promulgating for their universities ones which may cripple the institutions in precisely their function as social critic? To what extent can the exploration of the consequences of ideas in the larger community be subjected to either of two (or possibly more) fates: (1) the destruction of the critical function by the highly partisan development of solutions to immediate problems, or (2) the enhancement of the critical functions by the <u>responsible</u> taking of criticism into the public world, based on and feeding back into the realm of ideas in the university itself? What, indeed, does "responsible" mean in this context, and how widely understood is the problem of "exploring the consequences of ideas" among educators of all types, including student personnel folks?

How does one "force" disciplined reflection on a student? What are the necessary conditions for such behavior? At least three conditions were accepted by Commission members as reasonable:

1) The presence of older people. Against cries of "generational gap" and "trust only those under 30," we would counterbalance "The Lord of the Flies." For those whose hackles rise as though by instinct at this, let it be clearly understood that "older people" means, first, older students

as well as members of the faculty and administration, and, second, but equally important, ready access to them. And it seems inevitable that this kind of student mix, already pervasively with us, will expand and blur the image of college as a place and an activity for the 18 to 22 age group. Continuing education already has a quaintness about it as a term. The idea of university cities populated with individuals of all ages seems not unrealistic; the idea that "higher education" is only for late adolescents does.

2) Manageable groups within which conditions exist for easy and open communication. This calls for an atmosphere of trust among members of the group, and a relatively low level of evaluative and judgmental response to ideas as they are being expressed. This seems to be descriptive of what the typical classroom is not.

3) Flexibility in organizational and operational arrangements that permits the formation of groups built around topics and relationships of importance to individuals in their pursuit of truth. An example is the Antioch Viet Nam teach-in, a good example of institutional flexibility to provide a valuable learning experience at a time that members of the community were ready for it. Classes were called off for three days on condition that pre- and post-evaluations would be conducted to measure the effectiveness of the process as well as of the content of the experience for bringing about changes in the participants.

Reasonable as these conditions may seem, we readily acknowledge the sense of opening Pandora's box that their implementation entails. Must institutions actively recruit different students to provide for the pre-

sence of the older person? Does the condition of "easy and open communication" imply that there is no place for the large lecture? Is it possible for any institution to be flexible in its organizational and operational arrangements without courting academic and administrative chaos? Are there qualities in the traditional relationship between teacher and student and in the way in which universities must go about their business that put up barriers to this kind of learning?

A restatement of the mission of the university would include at least three functions that have been considered here. The first is that of social critic. "Critical" is used in its first definition as an expression of a reasoned opinion on a matter, involving a judgment of its value, truth or significance. The second function we see as subordinate to that of social critic, but an understandable consequence of the critical role - the implementer of social change. The third function we would not rank third in importance - to provide associates for students as they develop critical facilities through the process of disciplined reflection. When this institutional function is well executed, the university becomes a place from which emerge members of an informed citizenry, capable of acquiring appropriate information on which to base decisions. The university is both a locus and a producer of critics - informed persons who know how to make normative judgments. And, of course, the better the university fulfills its role of producer of critics, the less will be the pressure on it to play the role of social implementer.

II

Less philosophical, but equally important, questions touch on relationships within the university. What can be said about the changing relationship of student and institution? What changes may be referred to as "emerging issues?"

The historical American relationship of institution to student as parent surrogate, as moral tutor, as determiner of behavior, is surely undergoing change. In loco parentis no longer has much acceptance as a basis for sustaining old relationships. The recent American Council on Education policy statement on protection of the privacy of student records nudges institutions about the former freedom they may have exercised in deciding, without reference to the student, to whom and when such records should be made available. The draft statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students - drawn up by representatives of five major organizations representing the university constituency - clearly calls for institutional withdrawl from many practices formerly considered acceptable in dealing with students. The establishment of Free Universities challenges the historical assumption that "teachers know best" in the choice of courses to be offered and in the way in which they are to be offered. These evidences of change in the relationship of students to their institutions can be extended without difficulty.

Other kinds of relationships need exploration, both to replace in loco parentis where it is inappropriate and to acknowledge the probability that the diversity of students, faculties and institutions, and situations in which all are involved, requires several kinds of rela-

tionships to be put into use at one time or another. Alternatives to in loco parentis include relationships that range from authoritarian to laissez-faire. Among them, and important to consider, are fiduciary and adversary relationships. Each can be defined in strict legal terms; both can be considered in less formal contexts. Elements of these kinds of relationships are already visible on many campuses, even though many institutions would not typically think to cultivate them or to consider them potentially useful.

The American Council on Education refers to a kind of fiduciary relationship in its statement on student records:

> The maintenance of student records of all kinds. . . inevitably creates a highly personal and confidential relationship. The mutual trust that this relationship implies is deeply involved in the educational process.

Most simply, a fiduciary relationship exists when two parties say, "I trust you; you trust me." Examples of such explicit and implicit relationships between students and institutional personnel or programs can be found in financial aid programs, student governments, classroom assignments, and conditions established by individual faculty members in their examination rooms.

Many feel that much of the tone and intent of the "Procedural Standards in Disciplinary Proceedings" of the Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students is based on the concept of an adversary relationship between the student and the institution. The use of such terms

as procedural due process, appeals procedure, judicial bodies, and the provision of defense by an adviser of the student's choice - such arrangements provide explicitly for the judge and the judged, and have a conditioning effect on other institutional relationships as well.

Replacements for in loco parentis are not yet clearly defined. Commission members were agreed that changes are necessary, that gains can be made from the introduction of other relationships, and that it is quite possible for several patterns of relationships to exist simultaneously. Of most importance is acceptance of the proposition that individual and institutional behavior can vary widely if the basic requirement to be reflective about experience is explicit and honored. We were also agreed that life is a pretty messy situation much of the time and colleges must be prepared to deal with it on those terms. We would do well if we were prepared to function with as few restraints as possible, and to insist on the revocation of any orders or regulations that are not really essential to the mission of the institution.

Student, faculty and - in some instances - institutional pressure to modify grading procedures; opposition to ranking students on the basis of grade point average; increasingly serious life-time consequences for students of dismissal from their institution; increasing assurance that what one learns bears little relationship to the grade that is assigned - relatively persuasive evidence on all these matters suggests that students have ground for objecting to a great deal of the faculty-administrative relationships affecting their tenure as undergraduates. It is possible to anticipate pressure to revise our concept of what the institution can

or should do to, for, or with a student, once he is accepted for enrollment. On the one hand, the forces which require us to examine this question seem to derive primarily from the sheer fact that the rate of social change has made the standard notion of the "transmission of the culture" a seriously and significantly (although far from wholly) outmoded one. What <u>educational</u> missions of the university can be conceived that would appropriately replace it and build upon this old convention? On the other hand, if the "transmission of the culture" no longer defines an adequate curriculum and a suitable form of college experience, then we are brought face to face with some hard criterion questions. For instance, in order to receive an earned baccalaureate from X University, what must a student learn? What should the student be learning or experiencing to warrant continuing the relationship that exists between him and the university, and by what criteria should each judge when the relationship should be terminated? To ask the question this way puts the emphasis on learning rather than teaching, provides at least ample room to examine the nature of the student's experience outside the classroom as well as within it, and demands attention to a continuing clarification of the objectives and relationships of those involved.

III

Another issue that may emerge as a consequence of the larger shift in relationship within the institution appears in the housing, dining and other residential and "maintenance" policies followed by most universities. There may develop a strong resistance in the years to come among students to accept present patterns of living on campus. Students may refuse to

live, eat, or spend their out-of-class hours in surroundings that they see as noisy, crowded, "institutional," and comparably expensive to facilities in the community. Universities may be left with mortgages and bonded indebtednesses on buildings which students will not occupy or pay for because they contribute inadequately to the educative and humane character of the college environment.

Students speak of many new residence halls as "instant slums" built without proper regard for the prerogative of their tenants. The real issue to be faced in this area is that the housing can not be considered as the "problem" in itself. General facilities for students are as important to learning as are the classrooms and laboratories. Individuals need to be housed and fed, but they need much more that is not usually considered essential to the learning condition. An environment that, at the same time, encourages and facilitates reflectiveness, gregariousness, privacy, and even the ventilation of tensions and aggressions - all these are related to the learning process and call for attention. The cry for consideration of these factors has been voiced by some; the full educational implications have not been recognized by many faculties and administrators.

The freedom of students to seek housing where their environment contributes as effectively to their education as they think possible may be regarded by students as sufficient reason to reject institutional housing policies that are based too frequently on institutional need to amortize construction costs and not on educational logic. Frequently

overlooked is the fact that student housing was not originally an administrative need, but an educational necessity. Problems arise when institutions finally begin to require that students occupy specific space when such a requirement is of more use and service to the institution than to the student. Even on campuses where student life is thought to be quite free and unregimented, confusion about the purpose of housing is characterized by the canard, "It's OK to have girls in your room, but don't put Scotch Tape on the walls."

An issue that requires serious attention is based on the extent to which institutions consider the investment of funds in these various areas important and educationally relevant. It is quite likely that the amount now allocated for these maintenance functions and facilities is only a fraction of that required to maintain and enhance the entire educational venture. Inexpensive residence facilities, with "Early-American-Military" as the dominant architectural motif, may be all right if we are willing to permit and facilitate students who wish to adapt their quarters to their own needs and purposes. To do significant things with student housing will cost money - far more money than can be realized from room and board revenue, and far more money than has been invested by almost all residential institutions to date. But in light of our best knowledge, it is here that much of the education that we think is important actually occurs. Because there is a likelihood of considerable financial investment in this area - in one way or another - we feel that it is terribly important to involve many people on each campus in thinking through possible and desirable future facilities, programs, and funding.

IV

Changing patterns of relationships on most campuses are frequently accompanied by changes in what has been considered as "acceptable" behavior by students. The aggressive, dialectical style identified with political activists in the college community is seen by many as useful, important, and appropriate for bringing about changes which are desired. An issue for institutional personnel - no less than for members of society in general - lies in the open espousal by some of eristic tactics to gain desired ends. Institutional inability to cope with this kind of behavior will teach its own lesson about the failure of the intellectual to deal with behavior that has been defined as anti-intellectual or a-intellectual.

This matter is a serious and increasingly pervasive one. What are our best judgments about its roots, and what are the implied criticisms of previous and conventional practices to which we should give an attentive and imaginative ear? In at least the interest of stimulating some important discussions, we feel obliged to offer some of our best guesses here. For instance, it is possible to regard this state of affairs as profoundly related to a growing romanticism in our culture generally. Part of it is founded on the increasing breadth and validity of the generational gap and the yearnings of youth for the power that ordinarily comes to majorities or large minorities of people in society. Some of it stems from the experience of the civil rights movement (as of 1960-63) and the sheer success of the public tactics and protest, dissent, and disruption. In both the activist and the hippie segments of student society, there are elements that are highly suspicious of the

intellectual's commitment to words rather than to deeds and people; although this situation may reflect far more a failure to understand the authentic role and contribution of the intellectual to society, it also may indicate an enormous failure on the part of the academic community to demonstrate to students the utility of the life of the intellectual in a world like ours. True, the proposition jumps over too much ground too quickly, but it is quite possible that our colleges and universities may never again serve a genuinely relevant <u>educational</u> function unless they can demonstrate the meaning and vitality of <u>ideas</u> through some sort of examination of their potential consequences in the larger affairs of men. It even seems conceivable that one of the outcomes of the eristic thrust of some students may be the driving of colleges and universities to a consideration of precisely this problem: How can we make clear the vigor, usefulness, and morality of sheer thought in the modern world on demonstrably humanistic terms?

It is less easy, but increasingly common, for similar questions to be put by students who suspect that the professed importance of the examined life may be just an exercise for undergraduates. For example, the student is encouraged to study in the area of sociology and genetics and race, and yet, in some instances, he is confronted with institutional disapproval when he chooses to participate in demonstrations against injustices that he sees arising from the manipulation of information he has been learning in his studies. It may appear to thoughtful students that the academic role model is not an acceptable one; there appears to be a relevancy-gap between what is preached and what is practiced. The rude

catcalls from perceptive students to this kind of institutional behavior cannot honestly be held "unacceptable." What is called for is a change that will be beneficial to all concerned, and that will serve as an intellectually honest resistance to pressure for change that seems similar but that actually come from a nihilistic position.

V

Another issue of consequence, although not new by any means, concerns the place of the student in the governance of the institution within which he is a student. National student groups are in full cry on this point, and the opinions and practices of college and university faculty and administrators are far from uniform. What are the areas, if any, in the experience of the student over which he has or should have the right and obligation of full decision. What are the areas in which he should be involved in decision-making, but only in a limited way? What does "limited way" mean? Is there such a thing as "tokenism" in this area as objectionable as it is in others? What <u>are</u> the proper sources - and meaning - of "authority" in a contemporary college or university?

It is not daring to predict more and more involvement of students in governance in the next 10 to 20 years. One familiar theory holds that a student's involvement provides one of the most effective ways for him to learn, and this principle italicizes the question of finding ways to spread opportunities for sharing in governance among many. The relevance of the campus interlude becomes shaky when one professes self-fulfillment of the individual as important and yet denies him an opportunity to be involved in the relationships and responsibilities of governance properly

and systematically reflected upon. We also acknowledge that the issue of student involvement in governance cannot be fruitfully considered in any particular institution apart from faculty demands for such participation or apart from the total structure through which a college or university manages its affairs.

VI

Among the many difficult questions posed by changing relationships, one concerns the importance of style. Style means distinctiveness - the way in which an individual is known as an individual. We may come to realize that the identifiable and definable styles used in our relationship with one another in an academic community are as significant as the content of our relationships. It may become increasingly important to inventory the style - or the spirit of honesty and authenticity - which characterizes our campuses.

Style clearly has an importance all its own, and we have much too long neglected it. At the same time, there may be an even more fundamental issue, that of humanization itself, that is at stake here. For many students - and even for many of us who qualify as "adults" - the contemporary scene is a little frighteningly dominated by the conceptual, the abstract, and the manipulative, the rational, the systematic side of the human animal. What about the affective and interpersonal elements? What about the submerged parts of the human iceberg that are so determinative in relationships of love and friendship? What about the irrationalities that bind men together as well as rive them apart? Are not these some of the things that students are bugging us to understand more fully and to help them to understand in more adequate ways? And, indeed, are not these

some of the questions to which student personnel workers were supposed to be addressing themselves before they became housekeepers and maintainers of order?

Student personnel workers in higher education have, with few exceptions, inhabited their own isolated cloister within their institution's ivory tower. The energy required to "keep the store" has been a real or rationalized excuse for the inability or failure of many to approach and take positions on matters that once could have been identified as "emerging issues." Those of us represented by COSPA may well be required to make some changes in our relationships and in our behavior with students, faculties, and administrations if we pursue the task set for the Commission. The identification and consideration of emerging issues will probably have as one of its consequences the expectation that COSPA members will be prepared and willing to provide leadership in dealing with the problems. This has not been a familiar role for student personnel workers in the past; it may not be a comfortable one for the future. But if we do not give careful consideration to our professional obligation in this regard, we may be forfeiting our right to identify ourselves as people who "work with young adults who are changing things."

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